



**6712-01**

## **FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION**

### **Information Collections Being Reviewed by the Federal Communications Commission**

**[OMB 3060-XXXX, OMB 3060-0986]**

**AGENCY:** Federal Communications Commission.

**ACTION:** Notice and request for comments.

**SUMMARY:** As part of its continuing effort to reduce paperwork burdens, and as required by the Paperwork Reduction Act (PRA) of 1995, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC or the Commission) invites the general public and other Federal agencies to take this opportunity to comment on the following information collection. Comments are requested concerning: whether the proposed collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the Commission, including whether the information shall have practical utility; the accuracy of the Commission's burden estimate; ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information collected; ways to minimize the burden of the collection of information on the respondents, including the use of automated collection techniques or other forms of information technology; and ways to further reduce the information collection burden on small business concerns with fewer than 25 employees. The FCC may not conduct or sponsor a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid control number. No person shall be subject to any penalty for failing to comply with a collection of information subject to the PRA that does not display a valid Office of Management and Budget (OMB) control number.

**DATES:** Written PRA comments should be submitted on or before **[INSERT DATE 60 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER]**. If you anticipate that

you will be submitting comments, but find it difficult to do so within the period of time allowed by this notice, you should advise the contact listed below as soon as possible.

**ADDRESSES:** Direct all PRA comments to Nicole Ongele, FCC, via email [PRA@fcc.gov](mailto:PRA@fcc.gov) and to [Nicole.Ongele@fcc.gov](mailto:Nicole.Ongele@fcc.gov).

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** For additional information about the information collection, contact Nicole Ongele at (202) 418-2991.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** As part of its continuing effort to reduce paperwork burdens, and as required by the Paperwork Reduction Act (PRA) of 1995 (44 U.S.C. 3501-3520), the Federal Communications Commission (FCC or Commission) invites the general public and other Federal agencies to take this opportunity to comment on the following information collections. Comments are requested concerning: whether the proposed collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the Commission, including whether the information shall have practical utility; the accuracy of the Commission's burden estimate; ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information collected; ways to minimize the burden of the collection of information on the respondents, including the use of automated collection techniques or other forms of information technology; and ways to further reduce the information collection burden on small business concerns with fewer than 25 employees.

**OMB Control Number:** 3060-XXXX.

**Title:** Application for Connect America Fund Phase II Auction Support - FCC Form 683.

**Form Number:** FCC Form 683.

**Type of Review:** New collection.

**Respondents:** Business or other for-profit entities, not-for-profit institutions, and state, local or tribal governments.

**Number of Respondents and Responses:** 400 respondents; 800 responses.

**Estimated Time Per Response:** 2 - 12 hours (on average).

**Frequency of Response:** Annual reporting requirements, on occasion reporting requirement.

**Obligation to Respond:** Required to obtain or retain benefits. Statutory authority for this information collection 47 U.S.C. sections 154, 254 and 303(r) of the Communications Act of 1934, as amended.

**Total Annual Burden:** 5,600 hours.

**Total Annual Cost(s):** No Cost.

**Nature and Extent of Confidentiality:** Although most information collected in FCC Form 683 will be made available for public inspection, the Commission will withhold certain information collected in FCC Form 683 from routine public inspection. Specifically, the Commission will treat certain financial and technical information submitted in FCC Form 683 as confidential. In addition, an applicant may use the abbreviated process under 47 CFR § 0.459(a)(4) to request confidential treatment of the audited financial statements that are submitted during the post-selection review process. However, if a request for public inspection for this technical or financial information is made under 47 CFR § 0.461, and the applicant has any objections to disclosure, the applicant will be notified and will be required to justify continued confidential treatment. To the extent that an applicant seeks to have other information collected in FCC Form 683 or during the post-selection review process withheld from public inspection, the applicant may request confidential treatment pursuant to 47 CFR § 0.459.

**Privacy Act Impact Assessment:** No impact(s).

**Needs and Uses:** In 2011, the Commission released the USF/ICC Transformation Order and Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking, WC Docket No. 10-90 et al., FCC 11-161 (USF/ICC Transformation Order and/or FNPRM), which comprehensively reformed and modernized the high-cost program within the universal service fund to focus support on networks capable of providing voice and broadband services. Among other things, the Commission created the Connect America Fund (CAF) and concluded that support in price cap areas would be provided through a combination of “a new forward-looking model of the cost of constructing modern multi-purpose networks” and a competitive bidding process (the

Connect America Fund Phase II auction or Phase II auction or Auction 903). The Commission also sought comment in the accompanying USF/ICC Transformation FNPRM on proposed rules governing the Phase II auction, including basic auction design and the application process.

In the Phase II auction, service providers will compete to receive support of up to \$1.98 billion over 10 years to offer voice and broadband service in unserved high-cost areas. The information collection requirements reported under this new collection are the result of several Commission decisions to implement reform adopted in the USF/ICC Transformation Order and move forward with conducting the Phase II auction. In the April 2014 Connect America Order, WC Docket No. 10-90 et al., FCC 14-54, the Commission adopted various rules regarding participation in the Phase II auction, the term of support, and the eligible telecommunications carrier (ETC) designation process. In the Phase II Auction Order, WC Docket No. 10-90 et al., FCC 16-64, the Commission adopted rules to govern the Phase II auction, including the adoption of a two-stage application process, which includes a pre-auction short-form application to be submitted by parties interested in bidding in the Phase II auction and a post-auction long-form application that must be submitted by winning bidders seeking to become authorized to receive Phase II auction support. The Commission concluded, based on its experience with auctions and consistent with the record, that this two-stage application process balances the need to collect information essential to conducting a successful auction and authorizing Phase II support with administrative efficiency.

On January 30, 2018, the Commission adopted a public notice that established the final procedures for the Phase II auction, including the long-form application disclosure and certification requirements for winning bidders seeking to become authorized to receive Phase II auction support. See Phase II Auction Procedures Public Notice, WC Docket No. 17-182 et al., FCC 18-6. The Commission also adopted the Phase II Auction Order on Reconsideration, WC Docket No. 10-90 et al., FCC 18-5, which modified the Commission's letter of credit rules to provide some additional relief for Phase II auction support recipients by reducing the costs of maintaining a letter of credit.

Under this information collection, the Commission will collect information from winning bidders to determine the recipients of Phase II auction support. To aid in collecting this information, the Commission has created FCC Form 683, which the public will use to provide the disclosures and certifications that must be made by Phase II auction winning bidders in the Connect America Fund Phase II auction seeking to become authorized for Phase II support.

**OMB Control Number:** 3060-0986.

**Title:** High-Cost Universal Service Support.

**Form Number:** FCC Form 481, FCC Form 505, and FCC Form 525.

**Type of Review:** Revision of a currently approved collection.

**Respondents:** Business or other for-profit, not-for-profit institutions and state, local or tribal government.

**Number of Respondents and Responses:** 1,877 respondents; 14,335 responses.

**Estimated Time per Response:** 0.5 - 15 hours.

**Frequency of Response:** On occasion, quarterly and annual reporting requirements, recordkeeping requirement and third party disclosure requirement.

**Obligation to Respond:** Required to obtain or retain benefits. Statutory authority for this information collection is contained in 47 U.S.C. 151-154, 155, 201-206, 214, 218-220, 251, 252, 254, 256, 303(r), 332, 403, 405, 410, and 1302.

**Total Annual Burden:** 63,486 hours.

**Total Annual Cost(s):** No Cost.

**Privacy Act Impact Assessment:** No impact(s).

**Nature and Extent of Confidentiality:** The Commission notes that USAC must preserve the confidentiality of all data obtained from respondents; must not use the data except for purposes of administering the universal service programs; and must not disclose data in company-specific

form unless directed to do so by the Commission. Privately-held rate-of-return carriers may file the financial information they disclose in FCC Form 481 pursuant to a protective order.

**Needs and Uses:** The Commission is requesting the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) approval for this revised information collection. On November 18, 2011, the Commission adopted an order reforming its high-cost universal service support mechanisms. Connect America Fund; A National Broadband Plan for Our Future; Establish Just and Reasonable Rates for Local Exchange Carriers; High-Cost Universal Service Support; Developing a Unified Intercarrier Compensation Regime; Federal-State Joint Board on Universal Service; Lifeline and Link-Up; Universal Service Reform – Mobility Fund, WC Docket Nos. 10-90, 07-135, 05-337, 03-109; GN Docket No. 09-51; CC Docket Nos. 01-92, 96-45; WT Docket No. 10-208, Order and Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking, 26 FCC Rcd 17663 (2011) (USF/ICC Transformation Order), and the Commission and Wireline Competition Bureau have since adopted a number of orders that implement the USF/ICC Transformation Order; see also Connect America Fund et al., WC Docket No. 10-90 et al., Third Order on Reconsideration, 27 FCC Rcd 5622 (2012); Connect America Fund et al., WC Docket No. 10-90 et al., Order, 27 FCC Rcd 605 (Wireline Comp. Bur. 2012); Connect America Fund et al., WC Docket No. 10-90 et al., Fifth Order on Reconsideration, 27 FCC Rcd 14549 (2012); Connect America Fund et al., WC Docket No. 10-90 et al., Order, 28 FCC Rcd 2051 (Wireline Comp. Bur. 2013); Connect America Fund et al., WC Docket No. 10-90 et al., Order, 28 FCC Rcd 7227 (Wireline Comp. Bur. 2013); Connect America Fund, WC Docket No. 10-90, Report and Order, 28 FCC Rcd 7766 (Wireline Comp. Bur. 2013); Connect America Fund, WC Docket No. 10-90, Report and Order, 28 FCC Rcd 7211 (Wireline Comp. Bur. 2013); Connect America Fund, WC Docket No. 10-90, Report and Order, 28 FCC Rcd 10488 (Wireline Comp. Bur. 2013); Connect America Fund et

al., WC Docket No. 10-90 et al., Report and Order, Order and Order on Reconsideration and Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking, 31 FCC Rcd 3087 (2016). The Commission has received OMB approval for most of the information collections required by these orders. At a later date, the Commission plans to submit additional revisions for OMB review to address other reforms adopted in the orders (e.g., 47 C.F.R. 54.313(a)(6)).

More recently, on August 23, 2016, the Commission adopted the Alaska Plan Order. See Connect America Fund et al., WC Docket Nos. 10-90, 16-271; WT Docket No. 10-208, Report and Order and Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking, 31 FCC Rcd 10139 (2016) (Alaska Plan Order). In that order, the Commission adopted a plan for providing Alaskan rate-of-return carriers and competitive eligible telecommunications carriers (ETCs) the option to obtain a fixed level of funding for a defined term in exchange for committing to deployment obligations that are tailored to each Alaskan carrier's circumstances. ETCs receiving support pursuant to the Alaska Plan must comply with the Commission's existing high-cost reporting and oversight mechanisms, with certain exceptions and modifications.

On July 7, 2017, the Commission adopted the ETC Reporting Streamlining Order. See Connect America Fund; ETC Annual Reports and Certifications, WC Docket Nos. 10-90, 14-58, Report and Order, 32 FCC Rcd 5944 (2017) (ETC Reporting Streamlining Order). In that order, the Commission streamlined the annual reporting requirements for ETCs by eliminating rules duplicative of other reporting requirements or that are no longer necessary.

Further, since the previous filing deadline associated with this collection, changing circumstances have made filing certain information no longer necessary or required under the rules. For instance, the final Connect America Phase I incremental support deployment deadlines

were in early 2017, so there are no longer any reporting obligations associated with that support. Moreover, because the Connect America Phase II challenge process has ended, the Commission proposes to remove Form 505 from this collection. The Commission also proposes to move FCC Form 507, FCC Form 508, FCC Form 509 and the accompanying instructions to information collection 3060-0233.

The Commission therefore proposes to revise this information collection, as well as Form 481 and its accompanying instructions, to reflect these new or modified requirements. The Commission also proposes a number of non-substantive changes to the Form 481 and accompanying instructions. Any increased burdens for particular reporting requirements are associated with ETCs newly subject to those requirements as a condition of receiving high-cost support.

**FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION.**

**Marlene J. Dortch,**  
Secretary.  
Office of the Secretary,